

(6) encourages representatives of the private sector to coordinate with the Department of the Treasury and their subsidiaries to utilize licensing opportunities and expand access of key communications services to Iranians residing within Iran;

(7) welcomes the efforts of the international community to support protestors in Iran, including by removing Iran from the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women; and

(8) calls on the international community—
(A) to publicly condemn violence by the Iranian regime against peaceful protesters;

(B) to speak out against violations by the regime of fundamental human rights, including the freedom of expression, assembly, and redress of grievances of the Iranian people; and

(C) impose human rights sanctions on officials and entities that are responsible for the repression of current protests and involved in violating the human rights of the Iranian people.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I have two requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 26, 2023, at 10:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 26, 2023, at 9 a.m., to conduct an executive business meeting.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the privileges of the floor be granted to the following members of my staff: David Rosner, our detailee from FERC; and Sarah Stevenson, our American Association for the Advancement of Science, as of today until the end of Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Daniel Davis, my speechwriter—and invaluable member of our team—be granted floor privileges until January 27, 2023.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

UKRAINE

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, if I might be recognized, nearly 1 year ago, Russia launched an unprovoked, illegal, and brutal war of aggression

against Ukraine. In doing so, Vladimir Putin quite literally sought to wipe a sovereign nation off the map. But as the world witnessed in the months that followed, Mr. Putin had vastly underestimated the Ukrainian people and the Ukrainian leadership. Rather than capitulate, Ukrainians have resisted and saved their homeland from full-scale occupation. The courage and ingenuity shown by Ukrainian troops, many of whom were civilians before the war, continues to be nothing short of heroic.

This morning, we learned of yet another act of Russian terror in the form of a barrage of drones and missiles raining down on Kyiv. This left severe casualties. This act of brute intimidation, which has become all too common over the past year, was clearly meant to break the will of the Ukrainian people as they prepare to receive more military aid from the United States and from other allies.

Thankfully, Ukrainian forces successfully shot down the vast majority of those incoming projectiles using advanced air defense technology. This is just one more example of what many of us in this Chamber have asserted for months: If Ukrainians get the tools they need, they can finish the job and defeat Vladimir Putin.

The harsh reality is that these kinds of attacks on Ukraine, leaving a trail of casualties in their wake, have become far too common, and if leaders across the free world had acted sooner, we would be better positioned to save the lives and critical infrastructure now.

The U.S. Congress has led the world in supporting the Ukraine war effort. In fact, we have led the Biden administration—this Senate, on both sides of the aisle. On a bipartisan basis, we have provided security assistance, humanitarian aid, and direct support to Ukraine's government. Although this has amounted to tens of billions of taxpayer dollars, this is actually a bargain investment.

Let's put it in context. According to the Kiel Institute's Ukraine Support Tracker, the total U.S. contribution to Ukraine, through November of last year, amounted to only 0.2 percent of our gross domestic product. The new Congress must continue this bipartisan support for Ukraine, and I look forward to leading the charge as ranking member of the Armed Services Committee.

As the first anniversary of this war approaches, we should reflect on the progress made by Ukraine, and we should carefully consider how to help them decisively win this conflict so that a lasting peace can take root. To do so, we first need to state clearly what our American interests are in Ukraine. That is something the President and his advisers have repeatedly failed to do, choosing instead to make vague references to the rules-based international order, or words to that effect.

The American people are right to demand straight answers. With inflation

rampant, crime on the rise, and an open southern border, it is fair to ask why we should care about what happens in Ukraine.

I offer four reasons.

First, Ukraine matters because the security of Europe is closely tied to our own American security and our own American prosperity. For decades, all of our fellow citizens have benefited from peace and stability in Europe, purchased by the sacrifices of Americans in World War I and World War II. What is at stake today in Ukraine is whether the fruits of those sacrifices will continue to endure.

Allowing Putin to prevail in Ukraine would usher in a new age of chaos and instability and would invite Putin to test our resolve to defend our NATO allies. Make no mistake, Putin will push the envelope as far as we let him. His goal is to remake the old Soviet empire, and, regrettably, the West has misread and underestimated Putin's intentions for years—in 2008, when he invaded Georgia; and then in 2014, with the seizure of Crimea and parts of eastern Ukraine; and, yet again, last year in Ukraine with this full-scale invasion.

His imperial ambitions are now undeniable. If Vladimir Putin is not stopped in Ukraine, the security of the entire European continent will be put at risk.

Second, our support and the support of our allies for Ukraine has made a huge difference and has significantly weakened Russia. Thanks to the U.S. military assistance and the courage of Ukrainian troops, Russia has lost its ability to carry out near-term conventional invasions of NATO members, and we achieved that without having to send a single American soldier into combat.

The Russian losses have been massive. Last week, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, GEN Mark Milley, estimated that significantly more than 100,000 Russian troops have been killed or wounded in Ukraine during the war, not to mention thousands of combat vehicles, tanks, artillery pieces, and aircraft destroyed.

For those questioning the cost of our assistance, I would simply pose the alternative: How much would it cost in American lives and treasure to confront the Russians directly? Because that is the reality we face if Putin tests our resolve to defend NATO. From that perspective, we are getting one heck of a deal by helping Ukraine do its own fighting.

Third, our support for Ukraine is prompting European countries to take more responsibility for their own security, something we have long urged them to do. Republican and Democrat Presidents alike have long believed that Europeans should take the lead on European security. I agree. Almost every American agrees.

Thanks to our example, our NATO allies are now spending tens of billions more on defense, much of which will be

spent here in the United States. In particular, our friends in the United Kingdom, Poland, Romania, and the Baltic states are making all the right choices to help Ukraine win and prepare their own militaries to deter Russia for decades to come. Backing away from Ukraine at this crucial moment would undermine our credibility as we ask the Europeans to shoulder more of the collective defense burden.

Fourth, although this war is happening in Europe, we should not forget who else is watching. Some skeptics of our mission in Ukraine believe it distracts from our principal security threat: the Chinese Communist Party. But the reality is the exact opposite. Xi Jinping is watching us closely. He wants to see if we will stick by our commitments as he weighs his opportunities of invading his own neighbor—and our friend—Taiwan.

Our Indo-Pacific allies are also watching closely and even helping in Ukraine. As Japanese Prime Minister Kishida recently noted, “Ukraine today could be Asia tomorrow.”

Far from distracting us from China, stopping Putin in Ukraine is indispensable in deterring China. We dare not show weakness at this moment in Ukraine. Doing so would simply invite other dictators to act just like Vladimir Putin.

The bottom line is that America’s interest in this war is clear: We need Ukraine to win, and that means giving them the tools to prevail. Cutting our support would cost us far more in the long run.

Unfortunately, as we know, Vladimir Putin understands only brute force. He will not capitulate or negotiate until he is forced to do so.

This is something President Biden failed to appreciate when he downplayed Putin’s threats a year ago by talking about “minor incursions.” Remember that—“minor incursions”? At every step of this crisis, it has been Congress, not the administration, that has taken the lead, and it is something that the President still fails to grasp as he and his administration continue to slow-roll military aid for fear of “escalation.”

The Biden administration has come along grudgingly as Congress has pushed and pulled and taken the lead. For example, in May of last year, Congress provided the administration with roughly \$8.5 billion of drawdown authority to transfer weapons and munitions from U.S. inventories to Ukraine through the end of September. But the administration let almost \$3 billion of that authority expire.

Ukraine can win this war. Ukraine must win this war. But we and our allies have to do our part to help them. When Russia first launched its invasion, the prospect of Ukrainian victory indeed seemed unlikely. The Russian blitzkrieg forced Ukraine to fight for its very survival. It took repeated acts of heroism to push the Russians back, from President Zelenskyy’s fearless ex-

ample of leadership down to the foot soldiers, like Vitaly Volodymyrovych, who blew up the bridge beneath his feet, sacrificing his own life, to stop the Russian advance.

After Russian troops faltered in those initial days, they pivoted to a barbaric tactic of heavy bombardment of civilians—shelling homes, schools, and hospitals. These were war crimes. And as the Russians were finally expelled from Kyiv, we learned of the horrific atrocities committed against civilians, particularly in the city’s outer lying areas, such as Bucha.

And then began the counteroffensive. The Ukrainians retook Snake Island, liberated Kharkiv, and eventually expelled the Russians from Kherson in November. Their battlefield success demonstrated the impact of high-end U.S. military aid—such as HIMARS, long-range rockets—as well as the Ukrainians’ own capabilities to plan and execute complex operations in defense of their own homeland.

Today, the situation has stabilized, with Russia occupying only about 15 percent of Ukraine.

The courage of Ukrainians presents us with an opportunity. As the war approaches its second year, Congress must once again lead the administration to ramp up military aid to Ukraine to drive toward victory. We should all want Ukraine to win the war. A continuation of the status quo, which would drag out the war, favors Russia. The United States has made a huge difference in this war, and we can now tip the balance in favor of Ukraine if we take the right steps. I would sum up this policy of the right steps in three words: more, better, and faster—more ground vehicles and munitions, better equipment, faster deliveries. We need faster deliveries right now.

While I appreciate the White House’s recent announcement that we will send a batch of Abrams tanks to Ukraine, it is now our duty to follow through on this commitment and make certain the Ukrainians promptly receive the battlefield capabilities we plan to provide them, including the necessary training.

In addition, we need to give Ukraine ATACMS, long-range missiles, and advanced drones, like the Gray Eagle and Reaper. We should deliver these assets quickly to make an immediate difference on the battlefield. In concert with our allies, this approach of “more, better, and faster” would give the Ukrainians a real shot at victory.

At the same time, we must continue our work to expand our own defense industrial capacity here at home. The American people have already invested billions of dollars to replenish the weapons we transferred to Ukraine, particularly munitions. We are using that money here in America to expand production, doubling and even tripling production capacities for weapons like 155-millimeter shells, Javelins, and HIMARS, and our work on that has just begun.

Lastly, we will continue to maintain and expand the rigorous oversight

structure we have placed over military aid. As of today, Congress has imposed more than two dozen detailed oversight requirements on the Biden administration, and we continue to monitor their responses closely. Of course, some of the oversight work we do is classified to protect the people and sources conducting it. But Americans should know the scope of our oversight work, and so we will hold oversight hearings in this Congress, and we will do so on a bipartisan basis.

We should also press the Pentagon to make more oversight information public. We should continue tracking the work of the inspectors general in the State Department and the Department of Defense and in the U.S. Agency for International Development and 14 other government organizations that are already tasked with ensuring accountability for all spending related to Ukraine. These organizations are hard at work. Thus far, 20 reviews of Ukraine assistance have been completed, with another 64 reviews ongoing or planned. That is oversight.

We have work ahead of us this year, and it is critical work. If we make the right choices, we can ensure a Ukrainian victory over Russia, send a message of strength to China and others who wish us ill, and restore the United States as the world’s arsenal of democracy.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA BULLDOGS FOOTBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2023 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION COLLEGE FOOTBALL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res 16, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 16) congratulating the University of Georgia Bulldogs football team for winning the 2023 National Collegiate Athletic Association College Football National Championship.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHATZ. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered